

PEST ALERT

**Nevada Department of Agriculture
350 Capitol Hill Ave. Reno NV 89502
(775) 688-1182**

October 2003

Asian Longhorned Beetle Discovered for the First Time in New Jersey

Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus announced today that the Asian longhorned beetle – which attacks and kills maples and other hardwood trees -- has been detected for the first time in New Jersey in Jersey City.

The N.J. Department of Agriculture (NJDA) will quarantine the 9-acre site and the surrounding area within a 1-1/2 half-mile radius to prevent the beetle's spread.

"The experience of other states has shown that public cooperation is key to effectively eradicating this highly destructive insect," said Kuperus. "If not controlled, the Asian longhorned beetle could have devastating effects on forested areas and residential trees in New Jersey and throughout the Northeast. Therefore, it is critical that everyone assist in this effort by reporting potential infestations and cooperating with state and federal authorities working to control this pest."

The quarantine will restrict the movement of firewood, green lumber and other living, dead, cut or fallen material, including nursery stock, logs, stumps, roots and branches, from potential host trees. These items may be moved within the quarantined area but not outside of it.

"I am grateful to Secretary Kuperus for acting quickly to address this potential devastating threat to the state's forest resources," said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell. "The DEP will work cooperatively with state and federal agricultural officials to ensure that we eradicate this pest."

The Asian longhorned beetle, which is native to China and prevalent in Japan and Korea, has caused serious tree losses in New York state and Chicago.

The beetle was first spotted in Jersey City by someone who saw it fly onto a tree. A later news report called his attention to the potential threat of the Asian longhorned beetle. He contacted the NJDA, and state and federal agricultural inspectors confirmed the beetle's presence on Thursday. Based on an initial survey, it appears that approximately 100 trees are affected within a 9-acre area just north of the Newport Parkway and just east of Washington Boulevard. The source of the infestation is unknown.

State and federal agricultural officials have inspected potential host trees within a quarter-mile radius of the affected site and found no evidence of further infestation. Inspectors now are checking potential host tree within one-half mile.

USDA officials have determined that the Asian longhorned beetle first entered the United States inside solid wood packing material from China. It was first discovered in this country in 1996 in the Greenpoint area of Brooklyn. The beetle was found in Central Park in 2001.

Since 1997, the NJDA and USDA have conducted annual surveys for the Asian longhorned beetle in northeastern New Jersey. The Department currently is surveying plots within a 25-mile radius of the New York infestation.

In light of this week's discovery, more intensive monitoring of every potential host tree within a 1-1/2-mile radius of the Jersey City infestation will be conducted every year to ensure the beetle has been eradicated. Effective methods for eradicating the beetle include removal of infested trees and chemical treatment of surrounding, non-infested host trees.

The beetles are about 1 to 1-1/2 inches in length, are black and shiny with white spots, and have long distinguishable antennae that are banded with black and white. They attack many different hardwood trees, primarily maple (Norway, sugar, silver and red) but also, horsechestnut, willow, elm and boxelder.

To lay her eggs, the female beetle chews small oval or round niches in the outer bark of the tree. When immature worm-like beetles hatch, they bore into trunks and branches and create immense tunnels for themselves inside the trees. The adult beetles chew their way out, usually in late spring or early summer, leaving round exit holes about the size of a dime in their wake.

Signs of beetle infestation include:

- large round holes anywhere on the tree, including branches, trunk and exposed roots;
- oval to round, darkened wounds in the bark; and
- large piles of coarse sawdust around the base of trees or where branches meet the main stem.

Anyone who suspects the presence of the Asian longhorned beetle should contact the NJDA at (609) 292-5440.

For more information on the Asian longhorned beetle, including photos, visit the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service web site at www.aphis.usda.gov. Under Hot Issues, click on the Asian longhorned beetle.

###